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(54) Title: SYSTEM FOR CHARGE-BASED DETECTION OF NUCLEIC ACIDS

(57) **Abstract:** This present invention relates methods for detecting the presence of nucleic acids in a sample. In these methods, neutral capture probes are exposed to a sample possibly containing complementary nucleic acid targets. The foregoing mixture is submitted to conditions that provide for the nucleic acid targets to bind with the neutral probes thereby generating hybrids. These hybrids are submitted to positively charged reporters such as atoms, molecules or macromolecules, which electrostatically bind to the hybrids. The complexes formed between reporters and hybrids are detected by a variety of detection methods. Kits for detecting the presence of nucleic acids in a sample are also disclosed herein.

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